

Legal Terms

A.R.S.	Arizona Revised Statutes; laws of Arizona.
ACQUITTAL	Finding a criminal defendant not guilty of the charges against him/her.
ADJUDICATE	To decide or settle something in a legal setting.
AFFIDAVIT	A voluntary statement or declaration of facts which has been written down and confirmed under oath.
ALLEGATION	An assertion, declaration, or statement which is made in a pleading by one of the parties to the action, and tells what that party intends to prove.
AMENDMENT	Change in legal document.
APPEAL	legal process used to ask a higher court to review a lower court's decision.
APPELLANT	The party appealing a judgment or decision.
APPELLEE	The party against whom the appeal is taken.
ARRAIGNMENT	Case proceeding in which the defendant is brought before the court to answer to the charges by entering a plea of guilty or not guilty.
ATTORNEY AT LAW	Individual who is admitted to the State Bar of Arizona, and thus may represent clients in legal proceedings.

BAIL	Monetary sum which can be assessed by a judge to insure that a criminal defendant, who is being released prior to trial, will in fact appear in court on the trial date.
CASE	An action being resolved through the use of the court system.
COMPLAINT	The first pleading in a case filed by the plaintiff. It alleges the material facts and legal theories to support the plaintiff's claim against the defendant.
DEFENDANT	The person or party accused.
DUE PROCESS	The regular course of administration through the courts of justice, under the protection of the law and U.S. Constitution, enabling every person to have a fair and impartial trial or hearing.
EVIDENCE	A fact presented in court through the testimony of a witness, an object, or written documents.
EXHIBIT	A document or object, which is offered in evidence during a trial or hearing.
IMPANEL	The act in making up a list of jurors who have been selected for the trial of a particular case.
INJUNCTION	A writ or order by a court which requires a party to refrain from doing a particular thing or commanding that the party perform a particular act.
JUDGE	The public officer authorized to preside over, hear and determine causes in a court of law.

JURISDICTION	The legal authority of a court to hear and decide cases; the exercise of judicial power within certain geographic boundaries.
LAW	Provisions which regulate the conduct of society, primarily generated by the legislature through statutes and sometimes by court decisions.
LEGAL	Permitted by law.
LIABILITY	A legal responsibility or obligation.
MISDEMEANOR	A classification for offenses which are less serious than felonies; a misdemeanor is punishable by a sentence other than being placed in the custody of the Department of Corrections.
MOTION	An application for a rule or order, made to a court or judge.
OATH	A pledge, affirmation, or declaration to provide true information.
PETITION	Written application made to the court asking for legal intervention.
PLAINTIFF	In a civil action, the party who files the lawsuit; in a criminal case, the state is the plaintiff.
PLEA	Response of a defendant to the charges stated; the plea will usually be “guilty” or “not guilty.”
PRESIDING JUDGE	Supervisory judge who handles the administrative duties of the court.
PROBABLE CAUSE	Sufficient legal reason for arresting a person or searching a premises or item.

PROSECUTION	The act of instituting legal proceedings against someone or something.
PROSECUTOR	Attorney representing the citizens of a particular community or the state in a criminal case; this may be the city attorney, county attorney, or attorney general.
SENTENCE	Punishment imposed by the court in accordance with the range of punishments authorized by statute.
STATUTE	Law enacted by the legislature and published as the Arizona Revised Statutes.
SUBPOENA	Legal document issued by the courts to order a person to appear as specified and give testimony and/or bring evidence.
SUMMONS	Legal document issued by the court which directs the sheriff or other officer to notify the named defendant that a complaint has been filed and that he/she is required to appear and answer the complaint on or before the time and date specified.
TESTIMONY	Statements made by a witness who has taken an oath to tell the truth.
TRIAL	Formal presentation of facts to a court or jury in order to reach a legal resolution.
VERDICT	Formal decision of a trial jury.
WITNESS	Individual who gives testimony regarding what he/she has seen, heard, or otherwise observed.